

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF S.B. 284: AN ACT INCREASING THE AGE FROM EIGHT TO EIGHTEEN YEARS FOR AN INCOME-ELIGIBLE PERSON TO OBTAIN MEDICAL ASSISTANCE REGARDLESS OF IMMIGRATION STATUS.

HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE OF CT GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Dear Members of the Human Services Committee of Connecticut General Assembly:

My name is Perla Villezcas, I am a undocumented mother that has lived in the city of Hartford CT since 2003. I stand in support of S.B. 284: AN ACT INCREASING THE AGE FROM EIGHT TO EIGHTEEN YEARS FOR AN INCOME-ELIGIBLE PERSON TO OBTAIN MEDICAL ASSISTANCE REGARDLESS OF IMMIGRATION STATUS because it would be an important step forward in getting health care access for our whole immigrant community.

For the past four years, I have been struggling with a deviated trachea due to the lack of health insurance. I have not been able to do an endoscopy because it is a very expensive process that costs around \$7000 just to start. Just imagine if they give me medicine, or treatment, or if I need an operation— the hospital will charge me even more.

What I worry the most about is that it will get worse, or that one day I will not be able to breathe because I was not able to swallow the food I was eating. Therefore I prevent myself from eating hard food so that it does not happen. Because of that health issue I am experiencing I have lost 20 pound. If I had access to Husky insurance, I would not have waited all this time to treat my health condition. It is very stressful every time I have to eat. Whenever I swallow food I could choke. It is a very traumatic situation, I cannot enjoy myself eating outside at a restaurant because I am so scared to choke on the food I eat. That's why I prefer to say no when I get invited to go out to eat. It is a very traumatic situation for me.

Members of the committee, we ask you to support S.B. 284: AN ACT INCREASING THE AGE FROM EIGHT TO EIGHTEEN YEARS FOR AN INCOME-ELIGIBLE PERSON TO OBTAIN MEDICAL ASSISTANCE REGARDLESS OF IMMIGRATION STATUS. I know people who have very serious problems like cancer, who are suffering more than I am, and are going through the same issue of not having medical insurance or enough money to pay for treatments and procedures. The state should give us health insurance.

Thank you for your time,
Perla Villezcas